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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 10/616,399 | 07/09/2003 | Edward E. Horton III | 713-23-CIP | 9213 |

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| EXAMINER |
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SINGH, SUNIL

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
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3673

DATE MAILED: 10/29/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/616,399 | HORTON, EDWARD E. | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Sunil Singh | 3673 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21,23 and 24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21,23 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/10/03, 5/10/04</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 7 is confusing since the manifold is not on the production deck. The manifold is on the well deck and jumper means connect the manifold to petroleum handling apparatus on the production deck.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-9, 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hunter (US 5439321).

Hunter discloses a riser system for use in a deep draft floating platform (20), the riser system comprising a buoyancy apparatus (30,54,56) having an upper portion (30) and a lower portion (56) guided within the floating platform, the buoyancy apparatus having an upper surface (30); a well deck (30) provided on the upper surface of the buoyancy apparatus; at least two vertical risers (52) supported by the buoyancy apparatus and

Art Unit: 3673

attached to the well (30) deck and extending down through the buoyancy apparatus for connection to a seabed wellhead; and at least one tendon assembly (this is considered as the riser in the center) securing the buoyancy apparatus to the seabed; wherein the tendon assembly is attached to the well deck and extending along the vertical centerline of the buoyancy apparatus. A production deck (34) with petroleum handling apparatus (26). Jumper (70)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter.

Hunter discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Hunter is silent about the risers being coupled to the tendon assembly. To have risers coupled to tendon assembly is old and well known in the art. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hunter to have the risers coupled to the tendon assembly in order to prevent them from clashing together.

7. Claims 7, 13-19, 21, 23, 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter in view Danazcko et al. .

Hunter discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Hunter lacks a manifold connected to the surface tree. Danazcko et al. teaches a manifold (30) connected to a surface tree. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary

Art Unit: 3673

skill in the art to modify Hunter to include a manifold as taught by Danazcko in order to reduce the number of jumper flowline lines that need to run to the production deck.

With regards to claim 23, it would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the risers coupled to the tendon assembly in order to prevent them from clashing together.

8. Claims 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter in view Cottrell.

Hunter discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Hunter lacks a plurality of tubular buoys. Cottrell teaches a plurality of tubular buoys (see Figs. 6,7). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hunter by substituting the buoyancy means as taught by Danazcko for the buoyancy means disclosed by Hunter since such a modification is a mere design choice.

9. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hunter in view of Danazcko et al. as applied to claim 13 above, and further in view of Cottrell. Hunter (once modified) discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, the (once modified) Hunter lacks a plurality of tubular buoys. Cottrell teaches a plurality of tubular buoys (see Figs. 6,7). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the (once modified) Hunter by substituting the buoyancy means as taught by Danazcko for the buoyancy means disclosed by Hunter since such a modification is a mere design choice.

10. Claims 1-6, 8-9, 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Hunter '321.

Art Unit: 3673

Daniell discloses a riser system for use in a deep draft floating platform (20), the riser system comprising a buoyancy apparatus (92,100a,100) having an upper portion (100) and a lower portion guided within the floating platform, the buoyancy apparatus having an upper surface (100); a well deck (100) provided on the upper surface of the buoyancy apparatus; at least two vertical risers (90) supported by the buoyancy apparatus and attached to the well (100) deck and extending down through the buoyancy apparatus for connection to a seabed wellhead. A production deck (28) with petroleum handling apparatus (see col. 8). Jumper (101,103)

Daniell discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Daniell lacks at least one tendon assembly extending along the vertical centerline of the buoyancy apparatus. Hunter teaches at least one tendon assembly (this is considered as the riser in the center) securing the buoyancy apparatus to the seabed; wherein the tendon assembly is attached to the well deck and extending along the vertical centerline of the buoyancy apparatus. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Daniell to include a tendon assembly as taught by Hunter in order to aid in anchoring the buoyancy member.

With regards to claim 4, it would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the risers coupled to the tendon assembly in order to prevent them from clashing together.

11. Claims 7, 13-19, 21, 23, 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Hunter as applied to claim 6 above, and further in view of Danazcko et al..

Art Unit: 3673

Daniell (once modified) discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, the (once modified) Daniell lacks a manifold connected to the surface tree. Danazcko et al. teaches a manifold (30) connected to a surface tree. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the (once modified) Daniell to include a manifold as taught by Danazcko in order to reduce the number of jumper flowline lines that need to run to the production deck.

With regards to claim 23, it would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the risers coupled to the tendon assembly in order to prevent them from clashing together.

12. Claims 10, rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Hunter as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view Cottrell.

Daniell (once modified) discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, the (once modified) Daniell lacks a plurality of tubular buoys. Cottrell teaches a plurality of tubular buoys (see Figs. 6,7). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the (once modified) Daniell by substituting the buoyancy means as taught by Danazcko for the buoyancy means disclosed by the (once modified) Daniell since such a modification is a mere design choice.

Response to Arguments

13. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 13 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Art Unit: 3673

14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sunil Singh whose telephone number is (703) 308-4024.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 AM-5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Shackelford can be reached on (703) 308-2978. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Sunil Singh
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3673



SS

10/25/04